MANY AMAZING TALES IN THE PHANTOM'S JUNGLE...
PIRATE REDBEARD, THE FIRST JUNGLE PATROLMAN!
QUEEN SAMARIS, HER OWN HEIR FOR IT GENERATIONS!
THE AMAZING BIRD OF GANDOR!
BUT NONE STRANGER THAN "THE GLADIATOR." BEGINNING TOMORROW.
FALK & BARRY 10/6
ONE DAY--AFTER A TOUGH BATTLE AGAINST BANDITS--
FIGHTING--FIGHTING--MUST BE AN END TO IT SOMETIME.
FALK & BARRY 10/7
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EXHAUSTED--HE STOPS IN A QUIET SHADY GLEN--
THEN--A DEEP SLEEP.
AS THE WEARY PHANTOM SLEEPS--HIS SLEEP IS TROUBLED BY DREAMS OF PAST BATTLES.
FALK & BARRY 10/8
THEN INTO HIS DREAM--A SOUND--SOFT AT FIRST--
HELP!
THEN LOUDER!
HELP!
AS THE PHANTOM DREAMS--A SUDDEN CRY--
HELP!
?
WHAT IS IT?
FALK & BARRY 10/9
!?
HELP--PLEASE--HELP!

HELP-- HELP--

FALK & BARRY 10/10
THAT MAN! THAT THING-- FIGHTING MY HUSBAND!

MY HUSBAND --UH--

FAINTED!
?

THE WOMAN FAINTS--
FALK & BARRY 10/11

DON'T BE AFRAID. YOU CAME TO ME CRYING FOR HELP!
?!

YES! THAT MAN -- THAT THING -- FIGHTING MY HUSBAND!

FOLLOW ME!
THING?

AS THE PHANTOM FOLLOWS A LADY IN DISTRESS...
SHE SAID "A MAN -- A THING" FIGHTING HER HUSBAND.
HURRY, HURRY!

JUST AROUND THAT TURN--

THERE HE IS. MY HUSBAND!
?
FALK & BARRY 10/13

--WE'RE TOO LATE.
MY HUSBAND!
FALK & BARRY 10/14

NO WOUNDS -- A STRUGGLE WITH BARE HANDS.

I CAN'T QUESTION HER YET, BUT I MUST FIND OUT--
WHAT HAVE YOU FOUND, DEVIL?

WHAT HAVE YOU FOUND, DEVIL?
FOOTPRINTS, BUT SO DEEP?

HOW COULD ANY MAN LEAVE SUCH FOOTPRINTS UNLESS HE WEIGHED HALF A TON?
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NOT. THE VICTIM'S FOOTPRINTS.
PLEASE, LADY, TRY TO TELL ME WHAT HAPPENED.
YES.
TALK & BARRY 10/15

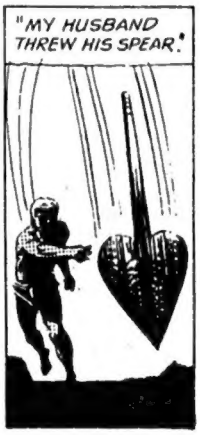
MY HUSBAND AND I WERE MARRIED YESTERDAY--
!

"WE WERE RIDING ALONG THIS ROAD-- BEGINNING OUR HONEYMOON--"

"IT WAS NIGHT --WE COULDN'T SEE CLEARLY. SUDDENLY THIS VOICE--
TALK & BARRY 10/16

YOU CANNOT PASS! FIGHT ME UNTIL ONE OF US IS DESTROYED.
!!

I DO NOT WISH TO FIGHT! STAND ASIDE!
THIS STRANGE MAN -- THIS "THING"--SAID "FIGHT UNTIL ONE OF US IS DESTROYED."
FIGHT!


"MY HUSBAND THREW HIS SPEAR."

"THE SPEAR BROKE!"

THIS SPEAR?
YES. THEN THEY FOUGHT. IT WAS AWFUL.
TALK & BARRY 10/17

"MY HUSBAND WAS A STRONG MAN, BUT HE HAD NO CHANCE AGAINST THIS-- "THING."
WHY DO YOU CALL HIM A "THING"? WASN'T HE A MAN?
I THOUGHT SO-- AT FIRST--
TALK & BARRY 10/18

"I TRIED TO HELP--"
!

ALL I DID WAS BRUISE MY HANDS. IT WAS LIKE HITTING STONE!
?!

THE WOMAN'S TALE--
I TRIED TO HELP MY HUSBAND--
FALK & BARRY 10/20

"IT WAS LIKE HITTING STONE. HURT MY HANDS!"

"I COULDN'T SEE HIM IN THE DARK--EXCEPT HIS EYES--LIKE BURNING COALS!"

"MY HUSBAND HAD NO CHANCE AGAINST HIM--I RAN FOR HELP--"

WE CAN DO NO MORE FOR YOUR HUSBAND. I'LL TAKE YOU BACK TO YOUR VILLAGE.
FALK & BARRY 10/21

WHICH WAY DID THE KILLER GO?
HAD TO BE THAT WAY OR I WOULD HAVE SEEN HIM.

MAY I GO WITH YOU? YOUR GUNS CAN REVENGE US.
YES, YOU MAY HELP TO IDENTIFY HIM.

THE FOOTPRINT AGAIN! SO DEEP! HOW HEAVY CAN HE BE?

?

NOT HARD FOLLOWING THIS TRAIL! HE CAME THROUGH LIKE A BULLDOZER! WHAT KIND OF MAN CAN HE BE?
NOT A MAN--A MONSTER--A THING!
FALK & BARRY 10/22

?
?

THE GATES WERE LOCKED, SO HE WENT IN HERE!
FALK & BARRY 10/23

?!
WHERE ARE ALL THE PEOPLE?

THE MAN WE'RE FOLLOWING CAME THROUGH HERE LIKE A HURRICANE!
NOT A MAN-- A "THING". WHERE ARE THE PEOPLE?

!!
FALK & BARRY 10/24

PHANTOM--!
GHOST WHO WALKS!
IT CAME IN THE NIGHT--!
IT WAS TERRIBLE-- AWFUL--
NOW, WAIT-- ONE AT A TIME.

OUR WARRIORS ARE AWAY ON A HUNTING PARTY--
ONLY OLD FOLKS AND CHILDREN AND WOMEN LEFT.
IT CAME IN THE NIGHT-- CRASHING LIKE A STORM.
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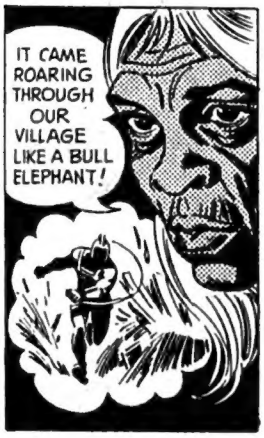
FIGHT OR BE DESTROYED!
WITH OUR WARRIORS GONE, WHO COULD FIGHT THIS MADMAN?
FALK & BARRY 10/25


IT CAME ROARING THROUGH OUR VILLAGE LIKE A BULL ELEPHANT!

DESTROY ME OR BE DESTROYED!
FALK & BARRY 10/27

WHAT DID HE LOOK LIKE?
IT WAS DARK. WE COULD NOT SEE HIM WELL.

"ONLY HIS EYES--BURNING LIKE HOT COALS!"

AS THE MADMAN ROARED THROUGH OUR VILLAGE -- LOOKING FOR BATTLE--OUR PEOPLE FLED.

"I FELL!--THERE HE WAS! I THOUGHT I WAS FINISHED."
!
FALK & BARRY 10/28

OUR WARRIORS ARE GONE. ONLY WOMEN AND CHILDREN AND OLD FOLKS ARE HERE.

"HIS VOICE WAS SUDDENLY SOFT."
DO NOT BE AFRAID. I SEEK ONLY WARRIORS. --TO DESTROY OR BE DESTROYED.

WARRIORS GONE!? I DO NOT FIGHT THE WEAK! I SEEK THE STRONG--TO DESTROY OR BE DESTROYED!
HE PATTED MY HEAD--HIS VOICE WAS SOFT, BUT HIS HAND WAS LIKE --STONE.

"INFURIATED, HE WALKED THROUGH ANOTHER HUT--"
WARRIORS GONE!
FALK & BARRY 10/29

"AND WENT OUT THROUGH THE WALL!"

HE WALKED THROUGH THAT WALL?
AS THOUGH IT WERE GRASS.

LIKE A BULL ELEPHANT--OR A BULLDOZER! WHAT MAN COULD DO THAT?
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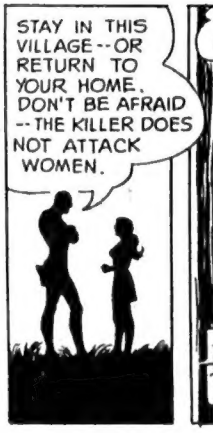
DO NOT GO ALONE AFTER THIS MAD THING--
WAIT TILL OUR WARRIORS RETURN TO HELP YOU.
I MUST GO.
PLEASE--WAIT FOR THE WARRIORS.
FALK & BARRY 10/30

DID THIS--AND ALL THAT--IS A MONSTER. TOO MUCH FOR ANY MAN TO FACE!
THE "THING" THAT
PLEASE WAIT FOR OUR WARRIORS TO RETURN
NO, I MUST FOLLOW HIM NOW--WHEREVER HE IS.


STAY IN THIS VILLAGE--OR RETURN TO YOUR HOME. DON'T BE AFRAID --THE KILLER DOES NOT ATTACK WOMEN.

ATTACKS ONLY MEN!
FALK & BARRY 10/31

PLEASE KEEP HERO HERE UNTIL I RETURN.
YOU WILL NOT RETURN.
CAN'T WE STOP HIM?
STOP THE GHOST WHO WALKS?
FALK & BARRY 11/1

GHOST? THAT HE WILL BE--!

SOMEWHERE--NOT FAR FROM HERE--I WILL FIND HIM.

THE PHANTOM FOLLOWS THE MYSTERIOUS KILLER WHOSE STRENGTH AMAZES-
FALK & BARRY 11/3

DESTROY ME OR BE DESTROYED.

DESTROYING LIKE A MAD DOG--BUT, ODDLY-- SPARING THE WEAK AND INNOCENT

AN EASY TRAIL TO FOLLOW--A TRAIL OF DEATH--
!

ONE SWORD STROKE DID IT!

FRESHLY KILLED —HE CAN'T BE FAR—

ONE MORE VICTIM--A LION-- AND THE HEAVY FOOTPRINT--

IS HE TRYING TO DESTROY EVERYTHING IN HIS PATH? MEN AND ANIMALS?
SHH-- SOMETHING AHEAD--
FALK & BARRY 11/4
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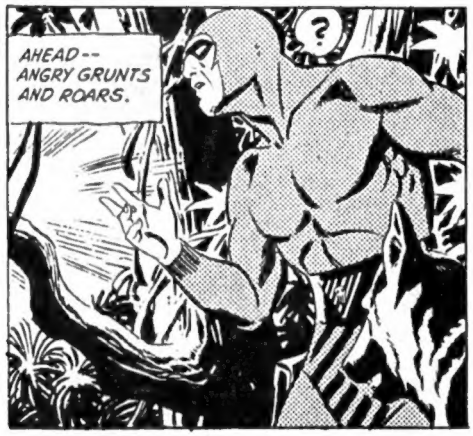

AHEAD-- ANGRY GRUNTS AND ROARS.
?

COME ON, DEVIL!
FALK & BARRY 11/5

?

HE ATTACKED GORILLAS! HARD TO BELIEVE--

HE MUST BE MAD! WHO ELSE WOULD DARE ATTACK A WHOLE TRIBE OF GORILLAS?!

DEVIL SUDDENLY BARKS--
?

FIGHT! DESTROY ME OR BE DESTROYED!
FALK & BARRY 11/6

THE PHANTOM AND THE DESTROYER!
WAIT -- WHO ARE YOU?
FIGHT! DESTROY ME OR BE DESTROYED!

CAN'T SEE HIM IN THE SHADOWS -- I MUST GET HIM INTO THE LIGHT.

FIGHT -- COWARD!

FALK & BARRY 11/7
!
WHAM!

IN THE SHADOWS -- THE DESTROYER SHOUTS ANGRILY AS THE PHANTOM DODGES.
I HAVE TO GET HIM INTO THE LIGHT!

NOT A FAIR FIGHT. I HAVE GUNS -- YOU HAVE ONLY A SWORD.
USE GUN -- USE WHAT YOU WILL-

HE STEPS INTO THE LIGHT -- AT LAST THE PHANTOM SEES HIM --
-BUT FIGHT!
!
FALK & BARRY 11/8

FOR THE FIRST TIME, THE PHANTOM SEES HIS UNKNOWN OPPONENT IN THE MOONLIGHT --
THIS IS AN UNFAIR FIGHT. YOU HAVE A SWORD -- I HAVE A GUN.
YOUR GUN IS USELESS --

FIGHT OR DIE!

THE PHANTOM SEES SOMETHING THAT AMAZES HIM --! WHAT?
?!
FALK & BARRY 11/10

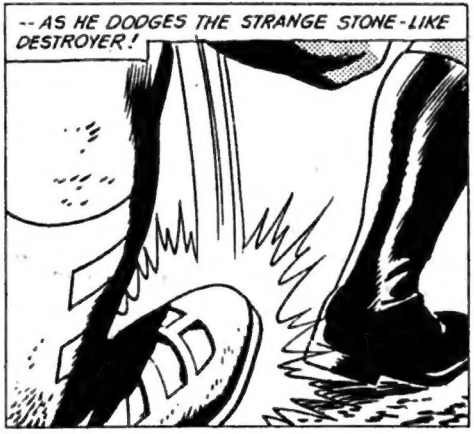
THE PHANTOM AND THE STRANGE DESTROYER!
FALK & BARRY 11/11
THE BULLETS -- THEY'RE BOUNCING OFF HIM AS THOUGH HE'S MADE OF STONE!

I TOLD YOU. GUNS ARE USELESS --!

NOW YOU WILL DIE!
?

THE STRANGE DESTROYER CHARGES--THE PHANTOM FIRES, KNOCKING THE SWORD FROM HIS HANDS!
HE TRIES TO REACH IT-- THE PHANTOM IS QUICKER.
NO SWORD!
YOU'RE A BRAVE MAN, BUT FOOLISH. YOU HAVE NO CHANCE. YOU WILL DIE!
AND NO GUN! WE'LL FIGHT HAND-TO-HAND!
FALK & BARRY 11/12
THE PHANTOM MOVES IN, HITTING HIM HARD--
WITH OR WITHOUT WEAPONS-- IT WILL BE THE SAME!
THE PHANTOM REELS BACK-- STUNNED!
LIKE HITTING-- STONE!
ALMOST BROKE MY HAND!
FALK & BARRY 11/13
LIKE STONE? IS STONE, FOOLISH MAN.
?!
YOU ARE STONE? HOW CAN THAT BE?
YOU WILL NOT LIVE LONG ENOUGH TO HEAR THE ANSWER.
!
HE BOUNCES OFF AS THOUGH HE'D HIT A BRICK WALL.
!
FALK & BARRY 11/14
PHANTOM VS. THE STRANGE DESTROYER!
!
CRASH
FALK & BARRY 11/15
WHAT KIND OF CREATURE ARE YOU?
YOU WILL NEVER KNOW! YOU WILL DIE--AS THEY ALL DIE!

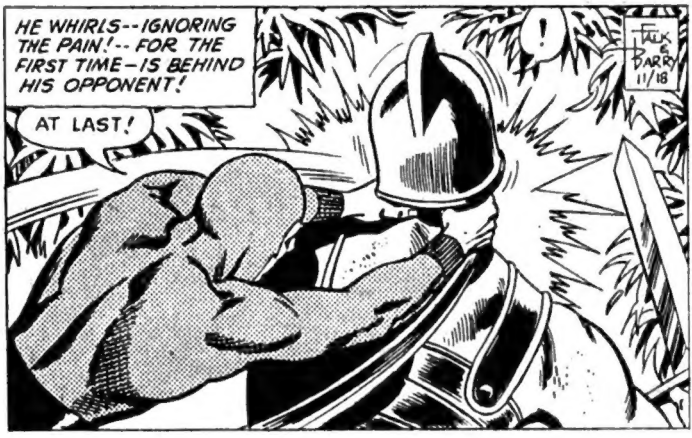
THE WEIRDEST BATTLE OF THE PHANTOM'S LIFE--
!


--AS HE DODGES THE STRANGE STONE-LIKE DESTROYER!

BUT THE PHANTOM HAS NOTICED SOMETHING. WHAT?
DO NOT TRY TO FLEE. I CAN RUN FASTER THAN ANY MAN!
!
FALK & BARRY 11/17

THE PHANTOM SEES SOMETHING IN THIS STRANGE BATTLE.
I HAVE TO TAKE A CHANCE--

HE CHARGES --A GLANCING BLOW OF THE STONE-LIKE FIST ALMOST BREAKS HIS SHOULDER!


HE WHIRLS--IGNORING THE PAIN!-- FOR THE FIRST TIME--IS BEHIND HIS OPPONENT!
!
AT LAST!
FALK & BARRY 11/18

IN THE WEIRD BATTLE, THE PHANTOM GETS BEHIND HIS STONE-LIKE OPPONENT!
I WAS RIGHT!
NO--!

--AND USES A TREMENDOUS CHOP--
NOT LIKE STONE HERE!
FALK & BARRY 11/19

THE POWERFUL DESTROYER FALLS! WHAT IS HIS SECRET?
NO--!

AS THE STONE-LIKE DESTROYER FALLS, THE PHANTOM CHOPS ONCE MORE --

HE HITS THE GROUND LIKE A FALLING TREE!

THE PHANTOM FINALLY DOWNS THE MOST UNUSUAL AND POWERFUL OPPONENT OF HIS ENTIRE LIFE!
DON'T MOVE, OR YOU ARE DEAD!
FALK & BARRY 11/20

THE PHANTOM AND THE STRANGE DESTROYER!
NO NEED OF THE SWORD--
NO TRICKS! DON'T MOVE! WHO ARE YOU-- WHERE ARE YOU FROM?

IT'S BEEN SO LONG SINCE ANYONE ASKED ME ANYTHING!

?!
I WAS BORN IN POMPEII.
FALK & BARRY 11/21

YOU WERE BORN IN POMPEII? YOU MEAN THE TOWN WITH THE VOLCANO-- MOUNT VESUVIUS?
YES.
FALK & BARRY 11/22

THAT PLACE WAS DESTROYED-- BY THE VOLCANO-- 2000 YEARS AGO.

I KNOW. I SAW IT HAPPEN.
?!

YOU SAW MOUNT VESUVIUS ERUPT-- AND BURY POMPEII -YOUR HOME TOWN?
I DID.

"I CAME HOME ON VACATION-- FROM MY PROFESSION-- I WAS WITH FRIENDS."

"SUDDENLY THE AIR WAS FILLED WITH SMOKE AND ASHES -- SUFFOCATING!"

THAT WAS OVER 2,000 YEARS AGO. WHAT KIND OF MAD-MAN IS THIS?
FALK & BARRY 11/24
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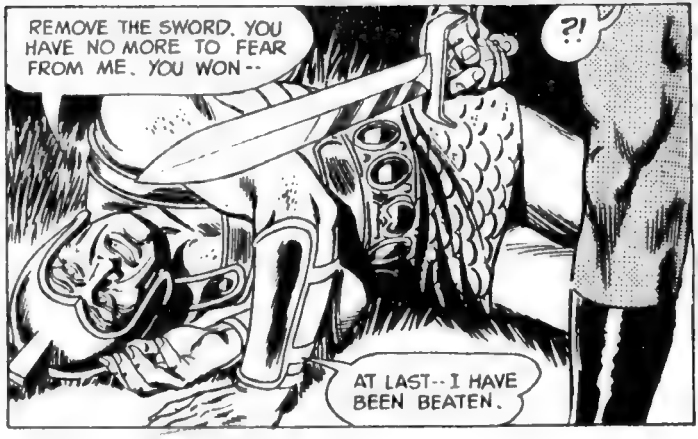
VESUVIUS WAS ERUPTING. I TRIED TO FIND MY PEOPLE-- IMPOSSIBLE--
FALK & BARRY 11/25

"GREAT RIVERS OF FIERY LAVA BURIED THE TOWN AND ALL IN IT!"

"THERE WAS NOTHING I COULD DO. I RETURNED TO ROME AND MY PROFESSION."

I WAS A GLADIATOR.
!

AFTER YOUR HOME-- POMPEII--ER-- WAS DESTROYED BY MOUNT VESUVIUS--2000 YEARS AGO-- YOU WENT BACK TO ROME TO BE A GLADIATOR?
WHAT ELSE WOULD I DO? THAT WAS MY PROFESSION. I WAS THE BEST--AND THE RICHEST.
FALK & BARRY 11/26


REMOVE THE SWORD. YOU HAVE NO MORE TO FEAR FROM ME. YOU WON--
?!
AT LAST--I HAVE BEEN BEATEN.

I CANNOT MOVE. ROLL ME OVER.
FALK & BARRY 11/27
NO TRICKS--

LIKE MOVING A BOULDER!

THE PHANTOM MOVES THE HEAVY STONE-LIKE FIGURE.
YES--AGAINST THAT TREE--YOU HAVE GREAT STRENGTH FOR AN ORDINARY MAN.

YOU HAVE NO MORE TO FEAR-- I TOLD YOU--YOU WON--I AM BEATEN AT LAST!
?!

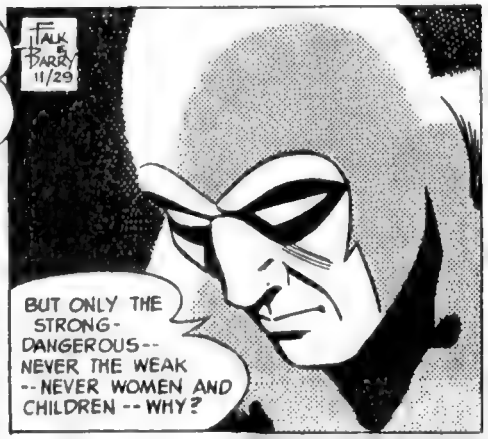
DO YOU FIND IT HARD TO BELIEVE I WAS A GLADIATOR IN ROME?
2,000 YEARS IS A LONG TIME.
MIGHT AS WELL HUMOR HIM.

DO YOU BELIEVE MY HOME WAS POMPEII--DESTROYED BY THE VOLCANO?
THERE IS MUCH I DO NOT UNDERSTAND.

BULLETS BOUNCE OFF AS IF YOU WERE MADE OF STONE--AND WHEN I HIT YOU--YOU ARE!
FALK & BARRY 11/28
YOU FOUND MY SECRET. IN ALL THESE YEARS YOU'RE THE FIRST TO SOLVE IT.

I WAS PONTILIAN--THE BEST AND RICHEST OF THE GLADIATORS OF IMPERIAL ROME. DO YOU BELIEVE THAT?
I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO BELIEVE. GO ON.

IN ALL THE YEARS SINCE--I ROAMED THE EARTH, FIGHTING ALL WHO CROSSED MY PATH--MEN OR BEASTS.


FALK & BARRY 11/29
BUT ONLY THE STRONG-DANGEROUS--NEVER THE WEAK--NEVER WOMEN AND CHILDREN--WHY?

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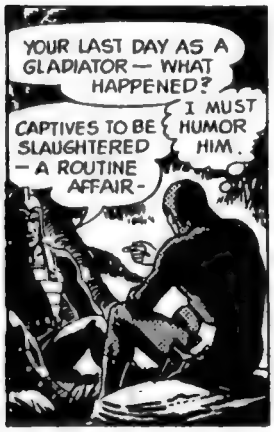
ER—YOU WERE A GLADIATOR 1,800 YEARS AGO?
I'VE KEPT COUNT OF EVERY YEAR—MONTH—WEEK—DAY AND HOUR.

ER—THE CURSE?
MY LAST DAY IN THE COLOSSEUM 1,800 YEARS, 4 MONTHS, 3 DAYS AGO—
FALK & BARRY 12/5

IT STARTED LIKE ANY OTHER ORDINARY DAY—A GROUP OF CAPTIVES WERE TO BE SLAUGHTERED BY BEASTS!
ORDINARY DAY?!


YOUR LAST DAY AS A GLADIATOR—WHAT HAPPENED?
CAPTIVES TO BE SLAUGHTERED—A ROUTINE AFFAIR—
I MUST HUMOR HIM.

"THIS WAS A JOB FOR WILD BEASTS."

ALL WOULD HAVE GONE AS USUAL—BUT ONE OF THE CAPTIVES BEGAN SHOUTING AT THE EMPEROR!
MONSTER—ABOMINATION—A DISGRACE!
FALK & BARRY 12/6

THE EMPEROR WAS FURIOUS!
CALL DRACONIUS!
DISGRACE—BLASPHEMY—FILTH AND CORRUPTION. YOUR END WILL COME SOON!
THE OLD CAPTIVE CURSED THE EMPEROR! THAT STARTED THE TROUBLE!
FALK & BARRY 12/8

"I WAS WAITING FOR THE WILD ANIMALS TO TEAR THEM APART."
DRACONIUS!
?

KILL THAT FOUL MAN WITH YOUR BARE HANDS!
!

YOU HEARD THE IMPERIAL ORDER, DRACONIUS! KILL—WITH YOUR BARE HANDS!
!
FALK & BARRY 12/9

?
THIS WAS A JOB FOR WILD BEASTS—A GLADIATOR OF MY STANDING WOULD NEVER FIGHT AN UNARMED OLD MAN!
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"BUT THIS WAS A DIRECT ORDER FROM MY EMPEROR! I HAD NO CHOICE."

I'D HEARD SOMEONE SPEAK OF THIS MAN, A BARBARIAN HOLY MAN, A PROPHET-
DO NOT DO THIS EVIL THING, DRACONIUS. INSTEAD, TURN AGAINST YOUR EMPEROR— HE IS EVIL.
YOU KNOW ME?

"I HESITATED — SOMETHING ABOUT HIM—"
NEVER UNTIL THIS MOMENT. YOU ARE A BRAVE MAN. SPARE ME—SAVE YOUR SOUL.

NOW, DRACONIUS! SLAY HIM!
FALK & BARRY 12/10

I THOUGHT YOU FOUGHT ONLY THE STRONG. HOW COULD YOU FIGHT A HELPLESS OLD MAN?
THAT'S WHAT HE ASKED ME-

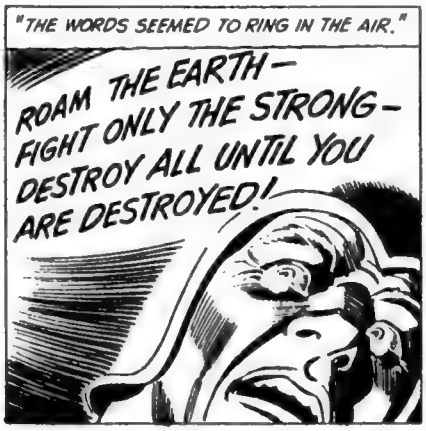
HOW CAN YOU DO THIS, DRACONIUS?
MY EMPEROR'S ORDER. I MUST!
FALK & BARRY 12/11

YOU HAVE NO SOUL! YOU ARE LIKE AN INSECT! THEN BE LIKE ONE!

"AS I REACHED FOR HIM-"
!?
LIVE AND ROAM THE EARTH—DESTROY —UNTIL YOU ARE DESTROYED!

YOU ARE WITHOUT A SOUL LIKE AN INSECT. ROAM THE EARTH — FIGHT ONLY THE STRONG—

AS THE OLD MAN SANK TO THE GROUND—
DESTROY ALL UNTIL YOU ARE DESTROYED.
FALK & BARRY 12/12


"THE WORDS SEEMED TO RING IN THE AIR."
ROAM THE EARTH— FIGHT ONLY THE STRONG— DESTROY ALL UNTIL YOU ARE DESTROYED!

THE PROPHET WAS DEAD— BUT HIS CURSE LIVED ON!
?

ROAM THE EARTH— FIGHT ONLY THE STRONG— DESTROY ALL UNTIL YOU ARE DESTROYED—

THE HOLY MAN WAS SILENT NOW—DEAD BY MY HAND—BUT I COULD STILL HEAR HIS WORDS—

"THE GREAT ROMAN CROWD WATCHING ME—
FALK & BARRY 12/13

"SOMETHING WAS HAPPENING TO ME THAT ONLY I COULD SEE—A STORM SEEMED TO CRASH AROUND MY HEAD!"

"THE WORDS OF THE DEAD PROPHET RANG IN MY EARS!"
ROAM THE EARTH— FIGHT ONLY THE STRONG—DESTROY UNTIL YOU ARE DESTROYED

"SOMETHING STRANGE WAS HAPPENING TO ME. THUNDER AND LIGHTNING ROARED ABOUT ME—"
FALK & BARRY 12/15

I FELT A SUDDEN HEAVINESS—AS IF I WEIGHED A TON—
?

"I LOOKED AT MY FEET—I WAS SINKING INTO THE HEAVY MUD!"

"THE GREAT CROWD STARED AT ME SILENTLY—I WAS THEIR FAVORITE—THEY WERE NOT PROUD OF ME NOW—"

"ONLY THE EMPEROR WAS PLEASED."
YOU DID WELL, DRACONIUS. COME FOR YOUR AWARD.
FALK & BARRY 12/16

FIGHT ONLY THE STRONG—DESTROY ALL UNTIL YOU ARE DESTROYED.

HE WAS STRONGEST OF ALL, THE EMPEROR—

"I SWUNG AT THE EVIL EMPEROR."

"THE BODYGUARDS RUSHED AT ME. I WAS INVINCIBLE."
FALK & BARRY 12/17

"THE CROWD ROARED—NOT CERTAIN WHAT WAS GOING ON—"

"THEN THE ENTIRE EMPEROR'S BATTALION CHARGED ME."

THE ENTIRE IMPERIAL GUARD RUSHED AT ME—
REALLY?
WOW, HE'S REALLY MAKING IT UP NOW.

"SPEARS BOUNCED OFF ME WITH NO EFFECT."

"I RAN THROUGH THEM AS IF THEY WERE WEEDS."
FALK & BARRY 12/18

"I CRASHED THROUGH THE HEAVY PORTALS AS IF THEY WERE PAPER!"

"I CRASHED OUT OF THE COLOSSEUM THAT LAST DAY!"

"I MOVED UNOPPOSED – ALL FLED AT THE SIGHT OF ME!"
FALK & BARRY 12/19

"WHEN I WAS ALONE – I STOPPED – I FELT MY BODY–"

I HAD TURNED TO STONE.
?!

I WAS HARD AS ROCK – I REALIZED THAT I HAD REALLY TURNED TO STONE–
FALK & BARRY 12/20

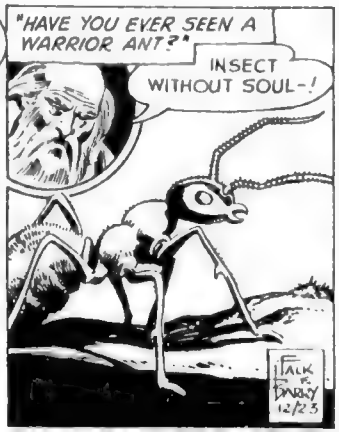
"I LOST MY HEAD – I SMASHED EVERYTHING WITHIN REACH!"

IT WAS THE CURSE OF THE HOLY MAN WHOM I WAS FORCED TO KILL.
INSECT WITHOUT A SOUL – ROAM THE EARTH – DESTROY UNTIL YOU ARE DESTROYED!

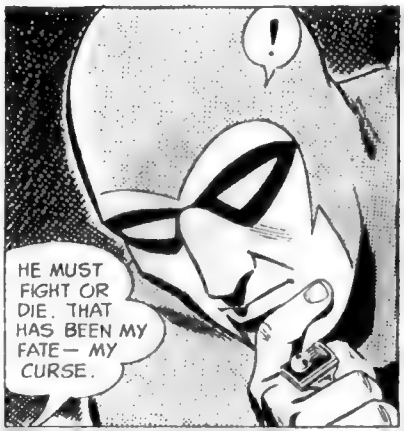
THE GLADIATOR'S TALE!
THE PROPHET'S CURSE! THAT WAS MY DOOM! PART OF ME TURNED TO STONE –
!
INSECT WITHOUT SOUL – DESTROY UNTIL YOU ARE DESTROYED!
FALK & BARRY 12/22

THAT KEPT ME UNDEFEATED THROUGH THE AGES! YOU FELT IT YOURSELF!
I DON'T UNDERSTAND. WHY?
PART OF MY BACK IS NORMAL FLESH. YOU ALONE SOLVED THE SECRET!

WHY IS YOUR BACK NORMAL FLESH – THE REST LIKE STONE?
NOT LIKE STONE. STONE! THE CURSE OF THE HOLY MAN.


"HAVE YOU EVER SEEN A WARRIOR ANT?"
INSECT WITHOUT SOUL–!
FALK & BARRY 12/23

THE WARRIOR ANT'S FRONT IS HEAVILY ARMORED, HIS BACK IS UNPROTECTED.
SO HE CAN NEVER TURN HIS BACK TO AN ENEMY.


!
HE MUST FIGHT OR DIE. THAT HAS BEEN MY FATE – MY CURSE.

"THAT WAS MY CURSE! I FOUGHT THROUGH THE AGES AGAINST ALL COMERS – WILD MEN –"
I WAS A CREATURE OF STONE – DOOMED TO FIGHT THROUGH ETERNITY UNTIL DEFEATED.
"– DESERT WARRIORS."
TALK & BARRY 12/24
CENTURIES PASSED. I LONGED FOR DEATH – NONE COULD DEFEAT ME – THEN ONE DAY – ONE CAME –
!
AT LAST AN OPPONENT WEARING STEEL EQUAL TO MY "ARMOR" OF STONE – A CRUSADER!
TALK & BARRY 12/25
BUT IT ENDED AS USUAL – I WAS IN DESPAIR – IF THE ARMED KNIGHT COULD NOT DEFEAT ME – WHO COULD?
FOR CENTURIES NO MAN COULD STAND AGAINST ME –
"I FACED ALL MANNER OF SAVAGE BEASTS" –
TALK & BARRY 12/26
"MANY AVOIDED ME – INSTINCTIVELY THEY KNEW ME TO BE UNNATURAL."
"I TRIED POISONOUS INSECTS AND SNAKES – NOTHING AVAILED ME – THAT CURSE DOOMED ME!
I TRIED TO DESTROY MYSELF --
TALK & BARRY 12/27
"THAT TIME I DESTROYED THE HOUSE – I WAS UNHURT."
"ONCE I LEAPED INTO A SHARK-FILLED SEA – EVEN THE SEA-BEASTS AVOIDED ME."
I DECIDED TO REMAIN UNDER-WATER AND DROWN.
WHAT A STORY! HE SEEMS TO BELIEVE IT ALL!

UNDERWATER EVEN THE SHARKS AVOIDED ME — I TRIED TO DROWN MYSELF-

"BUT SOME INSTINCT FOR SURVIVAL FORCED ME BACK TO SHORE."

FALK & PARRY 12/29
"IF WATER FAILED ME— WHAT ABOUT FIRE? NO, NOTHING COULD HARM ME."

I GAVE UP THE IDEA OF SUICIDE. AFTER ALL, IT WAS NOT FITTING FOR A GLADIATOR.
HE IS THE GREATEST LIAR OR STORYTELLER OF ALL TIME!

DESTROY UNTIL YOU ARE DESTROYED.
I ROAMED FOR CENTURIES LIVING UNDER THE CURSE OF THE HOLY MAN-

"FINALLY MEN INVENTED GUNS — HERE AT LAST WAS SOMETHING!

!

"BUT THE BULLET BOUNCED OFF ME— LIKE A RAINDROP."
FALK & PARRY 12/30

NOTHING COULD DESTROY ME. I WANDERED ONTO A MODERN BATTLE-FIELD-

"I WALKED INTO THEIR MACHINE-GUN AND GRENADES."

"THEY CAME AT ME WITH THEIR FOOLISH BAYO-NETS - NATURALLY I FINISHED THEM."
FALK & PARRY 12/31

NOW I AM FINISHED. THE END OF A LONG TRAIL.
?

YOU SOLVED MY SECRET - I THANK YOU FOR ENDING MY 1800-YEAR-OLD CURSE — "DESTROY UNTIL YOU ARE DESTROYED."
I HAVE NOT DESTROYED YOU.
FALK & PARRY 1/1

YOU DEFEATED ME IN FAIR BATTLE — THE SAME THING.
HELP ME TO STAND UP — TO SAY GOODBYE TO THIS WORLD.

CAREFUL, PHANTOM-
I HAVE ONLY A FEW MOMENTS OF LIFE LEFT—
?

YOU WEIGH A TON!
YOU EXAGGERATE!

I KNEW THE DAY WOULD COME WHEN I WOULD BE DEFEATED— MY CURSE ENDED--

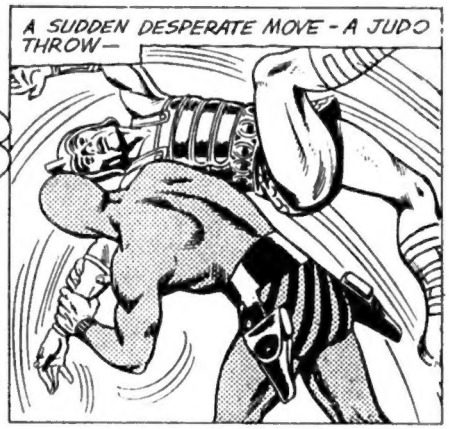
HE IS IN THE GRIP OF THE STONE HANDS!
BUT THIS IS NOT THE DAY!
?!
FALK & BARRY 1/2

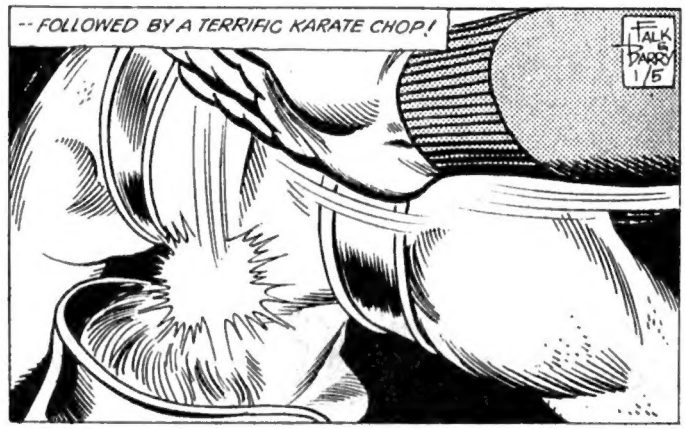
PRETENDING TO BE DYING— THE GLADIATOR SUDDENLY GRASPS THE PHANTOM IN HIS POWERFUL STONE HANDS!
FOOL! AFTER 1800 YEARS DO YOU THINK I'D LET MYSELF BE DESTROYED?
?!

IT IS MY FATE TO DESTROY UNTIL I AM DESTROYED! BUT YOU WILL NOT DESTROY ME—

YOU TOO SHALL GO THE WAY OF ALL THE OTHERS—!
FALK & BARRY 1/3

AS THE GLADIATOR SUDDENLY TURNS ON THE PHANTOM —
NOW, FOOLISH MAN, YOU WILL DIE LIKE ALL THE OTHERS-


A SUDDEN DESPERATE MOVE - A JUDO THROW—

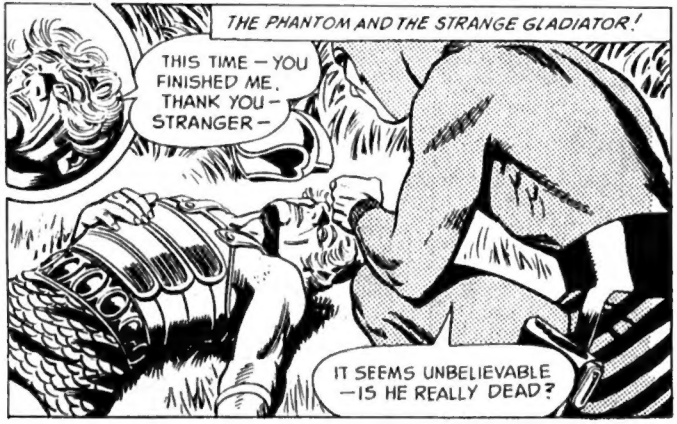

--FOLLOWED BY A TERRIFIC KARATE CHOP!
FALK & BARRY 1/5

AS THE GLADIATOR WHIRLS TO THE GROUND, THE PHANTOM MOVES IN FAST WITH THE SECOND KARATE CHOP-

CRASH!

THIS TIME-YOU FINISHED ME. THANK YOU— STRANGER.

DEAD-?!
FALK & BARRY 1/6


THE PHANTOM AND THE STRANGE GLADIATOR!
THIS TIME – YOU FINISHED ME. THANK YOU – STRANGER –
IT SEEMS UNBELIEVABLE – IS HE REALLY DEAD?

FALK & BARRY 1/7
WHAT'S HAPPENING TO HIM? – HE SEEMS TO BE – AGING!

"THIS TIME – YOU FINISHED ME. THANK YOU – STRANGER."
HE'S AGING – FROM MIDDLE AGE TO OLD AGE – ALMOST LIKE A MUMMY NOW!
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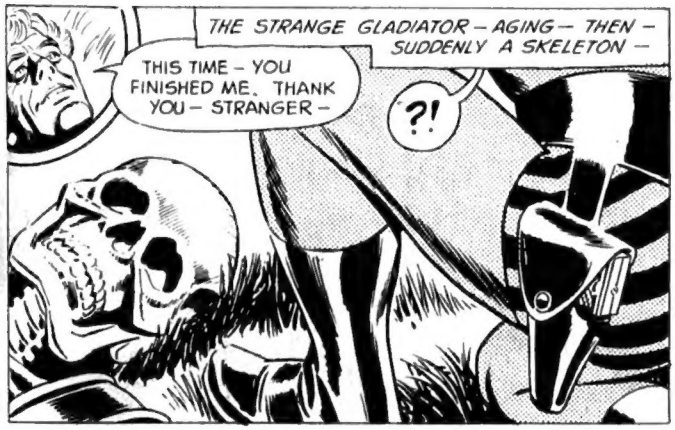
!!
FALK & BARRY 1/8


THE STRANGE GLADIATOR – AGING – THEN – SUDDENLY A SKELETON –
THIS TIME – YOU FINISHED ME. THANK YOU – STRANGER –
?!

THEN –

DUST!
FALK & BARRY 1/9

THIS TIME – YOU FINISHED ME. THANK YOU – STRANGER –
FALK & BARRY 1/10
HE TURNED TO – DUST!
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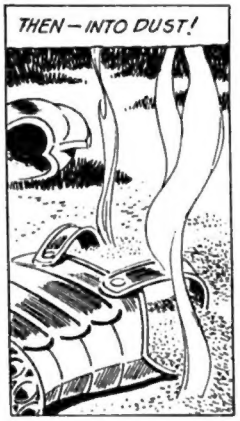
IN A FEW SECONDS – FROM MAN TO DUST!

THEN – IT WAS ALL TRUE?!

THE STRANGE GLADIATOR—
THIS TIME— YOU FINISHED ME. THANK YOU— STRANGER—
TALK & BARRY 1/12

WITHIN SECONDS HE FADES INTO A SKELETON—


THEN—INTO DUST!

ALL HIS STORIES WERE TRUE—? HE LIVED 1800 YEARS UNDER A CURSE?

INSECT WITHOUT SOUL—
ROAM THE EARTH—
DESTROY UNTIL YOU ARE DESTROYED

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WAS IT?
WAS I ASLEEP? YES, IT WAS ALL A DREAM!
TALK & BARRY 1/13

WHAT A DREAM—!

DESTROY OR BE DESTROYED.
IT ALL SEEMED SO REAL—

PARTICULARLY THAT FIRST BLOW—LIKE HITTING A GRANITE BOULDER!

TALK & BARRY 1/14
DREAM OR NIGHTMARE— IT SEEMED LIKE IT REALLY HAPPENED!

WHAT A DREAM THAT WAS ABOUT THE GLADIATOR!
LET ME SEE, I SAT DOWN HERE— EXHAUSTED—AFTER THAT FIGHT—

THEN I WAS THINKING ABOUT ALL THE BATTLES I HAD. THAT'S WHEN I FELL ASLEEP—

HELP— PLEASE— HELP!

TALK & BARRY 1/15
THEN—IN MY DREAM—SHE SHOWED ME THAT DEEP FOOTPRINT— SEEMED SO REAL!

IN MY DREAM I MET THE GIRL HERE— SAYING SOME MONSTER WAS KILLING HER HUSBAND—
HERE—IN MY DREAM—THIS VERY PLACE—SHE POINTED OUT THAT DEEP FOOTPRINT— OF THE "THING!"
?!
THE FOOTPRINT! I'M NOT DREAMING NOW!
FALK & BARRY 1/16
IS THAT THE DEEP FOOTPRINT OF THE GLADIATOR THAT I DREAMED ABOUT?
SOME DREAMS SEEM SO REAL—
WAS IT A DREAM— OR WAS IT REAL?
FALK & BARRY 1/17
—AND SOME REAL THINGS SEEM LIKE DREAMS. IT'S OFTEN HARD TO KNOW THE DIFFERENCE.
????
NEXT WEEK: NEW ADVENTURE